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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 233rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 28 November 1997, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. KA

(Senegal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Draft resolutions entitled "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People", "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat" and "Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat"

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the texts of the two draft resolutions concerning the programme of work of the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights were the same as General Assembly resolutions 51/23 and 51/24, with minor updating. In particular, in the third preambular paragraph of the first of those draft resolutions, the word "Welcoming" had been replaced by "Recalling" and the words "the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, signed at Cairo on 4 May 1994, and" had been deleted.
2. The draft resolution on the Department of Public Information was basically the same as General Assembly resolution 51/25, but some changes had been made. Paragraph 1 had been replaced by the following text. "Notes with appreciation the action taken by the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat in compliance with resolution 51/25;". In paragraph 3 (b), the words "the achievements of the peace process" had been replaced by "prospects for peace". Paragraph 3 (f) had been replaced by the following: "To continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian people in the field of media development, in particular to strengthen the training programme for Palestinian broadcasters and journalists initiated in 1995".
3. It was his understanding that provision for the programme of work entailed by those three draft resolutions had been made in the 1998-1999 programme budget.
4. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the three draft resolutions.
5. The three draft resolutions were approved.

Draft resolutions entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine" and "Full participation of Palestine in the work of the United Nations"

6. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine), introducing the draft resolutions and referring to the draft resolution entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine", said that an effort had been made to use the same wording as in General Assembly resolution 51/26 on the same subject with minimum adjustments to reflect the current situation.

7. The draft resolution entitled "Full participation of Palestine in the work of the United Nations" was a new initiative. The preambular part recalled all the developments relating to the issue within the framework of the United Nations and drew attention to the rights and privileges accorded to the Palestine Liberation Organization and Palestine by the General Assembly and Security Council. The fifth preambular paragraph made it clear that Palestine currently enjoyed more advanced rights and privileges in the Security Council than in the General Assembly, and the draft resolution was designed to ensure that Palestine had a similar standing in both organs. In connection with the last preambular paragraph, he emphasized the dangerous deterioration of the peace process as a result of Israeli policies and practices.

8. In the course of consultations on the draft resolution the European Union had proposed an amendment consisting of three operative paragraphs that would replace the current operative part. That amendment was not only structurally inconsistent but would also entail postponement of the issue, which was unacceptable to Palestine. However, Palestine was willing to consider any amendments the European Union might wish to make to the existing text.

9. The CHAIRMAN requested delegations which would like to become sponsors of the draft resolutions to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.

OTHER MATTERS

10. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People would take place on 1 December and urged all members of the Committee and observers to attend and to be represented at the ambassadorial level.

11. Mr. ZAKI (Egypt) said that his country had agreed to host a symposium on solidarity with the Palestinian people, to be held in Cairo in 1998, and would provide the Secretariat with the relevant information.

12. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that he wished to remind the members of the Committee of Palestine's second initiative relating to the participation of Israel in the work of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly. An amendment to the draft General Assembly resolution on the report of the Credentials Committee had been submitted with a view to addressing the concerns raised by some Member States. The amendment made it easier to deal with the matter since it referred clearly to the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the definition of the occupied territories since 1967. He hoped the amendment would command the support of a majority of Member States. It was essential to comply with the rules of procedure and established practice of the General Assembly with regard to the credentials of delegations. Any gross violation of that practice aimed at serving the tactical purposes of any Member State would be unacceptable and would undermine the integrity of the Organization.

13. Ms. REANDA (Chief, Division for Palestinian Rights), referring to the forthcoming conference on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, which was to be held in Brussels and organized jointly by the Committee, the League of Arab States and the Islamic Conference, said that a planning mission

of the Secretariat had visited Brussels in November 1997 and had received the full support of the Belgian Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It had been decided, in cooperation with the host country, that the conference would be held on 24 and 25 February 1998. It would be followed on 26 February by a one-day event for European non-governmental organizations, particularly those based in Belgium.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.